GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2058
ANSWERED ON:16.12.2003
TRANSFORMATION OF THAR DESERT INTO A DROUGHT FREE AREA
PRABODH PANDA

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has formulated any scheme for transformation of Thar desert in Rajasthan intoa green and drought free area by recharging the surface water;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the scheme is feasible both technically and economically;

(d) if not, the reasons for implementation of the scheme; and

(e) other measures proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL)

(a) to (e): No separate scheme specifically for the Thar Desert has been formulated by the Ministry. However,Desert Development Programme (DDP) which is being implemented in 7 States of the country on watershed basis is alsooperational in the Thar Desert areas of Rajasthan since 1995-96. The objectives of DDP are to control desertification and mitigate its adverse impact on crop production and human/cattle population by restoring ecological balance.

In addition, Special projects under DDP are also being implemented since 1999-2000, in ten desert districts of Western Rajasthan for Sand dune stabilization, Shelter-belt plantation and Afforestation.